

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 047651
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APPROVED BY S/S:PTARNOFF

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T STATE 047651

NODIS

CHEROKEE - FOR LEWIS AND ATHERTON TO USDEL NO.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, IS, US, XF

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH DINITZ FEB. 21

1. DINITZ SAW SECRETARY EVENING OF FEBRUARY 21 TO DELIVER BEGIN'S LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER ACCEPTING PRESIDENT'S INVITATION TO VISIT WASHINGTON (TEXT SENT SEPTTEL). IN THE COURSE OF AN HOUR'S INFORMAL CONVERSATION, THE POINTS BELOW EMERGED WHICH YOU SHOULD BE AWARE OF. SINCE DINITZ WAS SPEAKING WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS, HE ASKED THAT HIS VIEWS NOT BE REPEATED.

2. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT SOMEHOW WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO FIND COMMON GROUND ON OUR ASWAN LANGUAGE ON THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ISRAELIS WANT TO DROP THE WORD "LEGITIMATE" AND ASKED DINITZ HOW THE ISRAELIS WOULD REACT IN THAT CASE. DINITZ SUGGESTED THAT TWO CHANGES COULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR SOLUTION--DROPPING
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THE WORD "LEGITIMATE" AND ADDING AS AN EXPLANATION OF "PARTICIPATION" THE WORDS "THROUGH THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION." HE EXPLAINED THAT ISRAEL IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF A PLEBISCITE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE U.S. BELIEVES THAT A PLEBISCITE COULD BE LIMITED, BUT ISRAEL SEES A PLEBISCITE AS DANGEROUS IN A LAND WHERE TERRORISTS CAN INTIMIDATE AND INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME. WHAT

WOULD HAPPEN, HE WONDERED, IF THERE WERE A WIDESPREAD WRITE-IN FOR INDEPENDENCE IN A PLEBISCITE WHERE WE HAD TRIED TO LIMIT THE CHOICE TO EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF INDEPENDENCE. HE BELIEVED WE MUST GET AWAY FROM THE IDEA OF A PLEBISCITE AND PROVIDE A WAY FOR THE PALESTINIANS TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS IN THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS. THE SECRETARY SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD NOT RULE OUT SOME SORT OF PLEBISCITE. TURNING BACK TO THE POSSIBLE WORDING OF A DECLARATION, HE SAID HE IS NOT SURE HOW MUCH FLEXIBILITY SADAT HAS, ALTHOUGH HE MIGHT BE WILLING TO DROP THE WORD "LEGITIMATE."

3. THE SECRETARY NEXT NOTED THAT THE BEGIN PLAN FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA COULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR ESTABLISHING SELF-RULE BUT THAT THERE ARE SOME THINGS WE BELIEVE WOULD NEED TO BE CHANGED. THE SECRETARY EXPRESSED HIS FRANK CONCERN THAT THE ISRAELIS SEEMED TO BE SAYING THAT, WITH RESPECT TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ULTIMATE CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF THE WEST BANK, SOVEREIGNTY IS NOT NEGOTIABLE. DINITZ SAID HE SAW THE ISSUE DIFFERENTLY. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE PREVIOUS ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAD PROPOSED TO SOLVE THE WEST BANK/GAZA BY PARTITION. THEREFORE, IT HAD NO PROBLEM IN SAYING THAT WITHDRAWAL APPLIED TO ALL FRONTS-- A MAJOR BUT NOT TOTAL WITHDRAWAL. THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS TAKEN A DIFFERENT APPROACH. BEGIN
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DOES NOT THINK PARTITION IS PRACTICAL, BUT IF A REASONABLE PROPOSAL FOR PARTITION IS PUT FORWARD, HE WILL NEGOTIATE ON IT. WE SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE TREMENDOUS STEP FORWARD WHICH BEGIN HAS MADE, DINITZ CONTINUED. HE HAS MADE A DECISION, DESPITE LONG-HELD VIEWS TO THE CONTRARY, NOT TO ANNEX THE WEST BANK BUT TO PUT SOVEREIGNTY THERE IN ABEYANCE. HE COULD LIVE WITH THE QUESTION UNRESOLVED BUT WOULD HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY SEEING SOMEONE ELSE EXERCISE SOVEREIGNTY. BUT IF THERE WERE AN ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH OFFER THAT COULD BRING PEACE, HE COULD CHANGE HIS MIND FURTHER. HE CAN BE PRAGMATIC. IF THE PROPOSAL IS TO RETURN TO 1967 BORDERS WITH VERY SMALL CHANGES, THERE WILL BE "NO PARTNER IN ISRAEL" FOR SUCH NEGOTIATIONS. BUT IF THERE IS A SENSIBLE PROPOSAL FOR PARTITION (DINITZ SEEMED TO BE THINKING OF SOMETHING ALONG THE LINES OF THE ALLON PLAN) THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER IT. EVEN IF IT WERE DIFFICULT FOR BEGIN, IT WOULD HAVE SUPPORT FROM SIGNIFICANT SECTIONS OF THE LABOR ALIGNMENT AND OF THE LIKUD, AND IT COULD NOT BE IGNORED. HE DID NOT BELIEVE ANYONE WOULD PROPOSE SUCH A TERRITORIAL SOLUTION. RETURNING TO THE BASIS OF THE BEGIN PLAN, DINITZ EXPLAINED THAT SINCE BEGIN DOES NOT BELIEVE PARTITION

WILL COME ABOUT, HE HAS PROPOSED ANOTHER WAY OF CREATING
A NEW REALITY IN THAT AREA BY ALLOWING SELF-RULE TO

DEVELOP ALONG WITH A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL AND
JORDAN.

4. TURNING TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT SADAT NEEDS FROM THE
PRESENT DISCUSSION OF A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES, DINITZ
ASKED WHETHER SADAT WANTED A DECLARATION TO BE AGREED AS
A BASIS FOR INVITING HUSSEIN TO COME INTO THE NEGOTIA-
TIONS OR DOES SADAT NEED HUSSEIN ACTUALLY TO JOIN THE
NEGOTIATIONS PHYSICALLY. IF IT IS THE LATTER, DINITZ
DID NOT SEE MUCH PROSPECT OF PROGRESS. THE SECRETARY
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CHANGE, SADAT BELIEVES HE NEEDS HUSSEIN'S PHYSICAL PRESENCE
IN THE NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE EGYPT CAN PROCEED WITH ITS OWN
AGREEMENT. THE SECRETARY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF TRY-
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WE WOULD PRESENT HUSSEIN WITH A SITUATION WHERE HE COULD
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NECESSARY CHANGES FROM THE ISRAELIS.

5. AS THE CONVERSATION CLOSED, THE FOCUS TURNED TO THE
ADMINISTRATION PROPOSALS FOR AIRCRAFT SALES TO ISRAEL,
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LUMPING THE THREE SALES TOGETHER WOULD BE HARMFUL. THE
SECRETARY REPLIED THAT TRYING TO KNOCK OUT EITHER THE
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APPROVED BY: S/S:MR ANDERSON
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 047651

NODIS
CHEROKEE

FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 047651 SENT ACTION TEL AVIV, CAIRO
24 FEB 78

QUOTE S E C R E T STATE 047651

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UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

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TAGS: PEPR, IS, US, XF, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (CARTER, JIMMY), (DINITZ)
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